

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC. Bt. Louis, causing loss of life to the number | zagging across the clouds | Singularly of 150 souls and destroying properly worth | enough, it was only every third or fourth twelve millions of dollars. It was a disaster which will make May 27 a date never to be forgotten by any person living here at

The morning of Wednesday, May 27, 1896, was warm and cloudy and was in temperature and weather conditions very like the two or three previous days. For the two days previous, however, reports had been printed in the daily papers of the extreme high winds which prevailed in Kansas and Nebraska, causing a good deal of destruction in those States, and of a cyclone which had prevelled over a limited area in Illinois. Storms were expected during the day, but early in the morning there was nothing to indicate that anything more than the usual expected. The barometric pressure was rather unusual, but the changes of the reason were taken to account for this to a great extent, so there was absolutely no foreboding of the disaster which was about to happen in the minds of the inhabitants of this city. So the people went about their daily work as usual, making no other provision sgainst the weather than they had been in the habit of doing for the week past.

The temperature remained stationary during the morning and the skies only changed to get more and more gloomy. By half past 2 rain seemed imminent and the clouds over the entire sky were black and forbidding. There was not a breath of air stirring and the proverbial calm which precedes the storm hung over the city until 4 c'clock. During the early part of the afternoon the lightning was only occasional, but was extremely vivid and was followed by low, ruming peals of thunder, which seemed to come from a great distance. At 3 o'clock it was apparent that a severe storm was coming and the persons who were at their homes and the persons who were at their nomes took sundry precautions in the shape of closing shutters and screens, a severe half-storm which had occurred a few days previously and destroyed many windows making them fear a repetition of such an occurrence. A few minutes past 2, the sky began to change in color and get lighter, and it looked for a few minutes as if the

storm was about to pass over.

It was for a very few minutes that it seemed so, however. The sky kept getting lighter, but it assumed a sickly green hue toward the north and west, and the lightwhich had been merely in flashes be-

the clops were in every case sharp and load in contrast to the low runnings of the the time, and the occurrence will be most getting more and more sickly in appearance likely the most destructive tornsdo which will ever be recorded. morning and early afternoon. The sky kept to get darker and angrier looking. A heavy bank of greenish black clouds also rose swiftly from the north and soon spread over the entire porthwestern horizon. The lightning grow more and more frequent and now began to cause considerable terror by sirk-ing the wires of the city with sharp reports. the blaze being plainly seen wherever a flash struck a wire. As yet there was ab-solutely no wind and the leaves of the tree-stood absolutely quiet without the faintest

At 5 o'clock it was much darker than was customary at that hour even on a stormy day, and the peculiar color of the sky, the thunder-storm of early summer was to be absence of wind and the repeated lightning caused the great majority of people to harry home, it being evident that the city was in for something worse than even the ordinary thunder-storm. The business world, how-ever, had to remain at their posts until the customary hour, but on all the buildings the awnings were carefully taken in and the guye on many of the tall smoke stacks were tightened to prepare for emergencies. As yet there was no general slarm feit, the great mass of people seeming to take an in-terest in watching the clouds and in specu-lating upon the storm which was gathering. In the stores the salespeople gathered in the doors and windows and watched the lightning and clouds, there being little or no business to keep them at their work inside. It was about twenty minutes after five that the first breath of wind which had been felt for two or three hours became apparent. At that time there was a sudden breath of wind which grew stronger and stronger very slowly, making walking against it quite difficult and sending all the loose signs on the sidewalks clattering to the ground. Windows which had been left open in the business buildings were hurriedly closed, but the wind dropped suddenly and for a few seconds there was absolute calm. At the same time there was a sud-den drop in the temperature which was felt the more distinctly ewing to the lack of wind. For a minute and a haif there was a period of absolute stillness and then there was a sudden blaze of lightning ac-companied by a continuous roar of thunder. At the same moment without the silghtest warning the wind rese with a sudden shrick, which immediately deepened into a roar, sweeping everything before it and making it impossible to hear one's voice,

direction the lightning was striking the wires which still remained standing with a sharp series of crackling teports which could be plainly heard above the rest of the turnuit and the roating of the wind grew louder and louder. In the residence district of South St. Louis the wind reached

such a tremendous force that nothing could stand before it and scarcely a house es-caped injury, whole districts being fairly torn down by the wind. In the business districts in every part of the city the dam-age was very great, the entire southern portion of the Broadway business section being practically wiped out while the Leves districts along the entire front were act-

unity torn to pieces.

There was not a portion of the city which escaped damage to some extent during the minute and a haif that the wind lasted. The City Hospital was wrecked at the first burst of the wind, the entire two morest stories being blown off. The Four upper stories being blown off. The Four Courts building was injured hadly, espe-cially in the upper stories and in the jail. The Liggett and Meyer's tobacco factory which was under construction near Tower Grove was absolutely destroyed, even the bare steel framework in which the walls had not yet been inserted being twisted in every direction and torn apart. All the wharfboats along the Levee were de-stroyed as were the elevators and the majority of the steamers at the wharf. From north to south along the river front there was not a building which did not suffer severely, even the strong construction of the elevators proving a plaything for the tornade. The residence district around Grove had every other house Tower wrecked while the flercest fury of the tor-nado struck the Compton Heights residence section and the neighborhood of Lafayette Park. Eesides destroying the park itself, levelling the fine old trees which were the ornament of that entire part of the city, the wind levelled or partially lev-elled every dwelling in the vicinity, among them some of the finest homes in South St. Louis. Along Park and Jefferson avenues the cyclone played havoc with the buildings of every construction, the Anchor Hall at the junction of those streets losing its entire front. The West End suffered less than any other section, although the force of the wind was sufficient to break may windows, blow off many chimneys and destroy shade trees and telegraph poles. The poles in every portion of the city were blown down with their burden of wires. the weight of the wires proving too great a strain for the poles, even in the districts most lightly touched. The East Side suffered even more severely Almost before the sound of the wind had in proportion than did St. Louis. The Levee

CARELESSNESS WITH MONEY,

The Secretary of the Treasury has a very large directory of careless people. • of people who have money to burn or otherwise desiroy, and who appeal to him . ♦ for reimbursement. Uncle Sam is kind enough to restore lost money when he is ♦ • satisfied that it is actually out of existence, and the Treasury Department has • ♦ to look after this branch of his floancial affairs. Hardly a day passes that the ♦ Secretary is not appealed to to make good money destroyed, and he often re-· work of destruction was wrought.

One of the intest applications was from a Vermont farmer, who sent a mass . of remaints of bills that approached the condition of pulp, and asked for \$250 \(\)
in return, which, after some delay, he received. He said he had very carefully \(\)
hidden the money under the rafters of his barn, and somehow it had gotten into \(\)
the hay and bran fed to one of his cows. The cow was chewing the green feed \(\) . when its nature was discovered

Another farmer, from Kansas, has sent a lot of chopped bills that he says represent \$40. According to his story they were in the pocket of a vest that was hung on a feed cutter, and when it was being operated the corner of the vest that held the money got between its knives, and, with the money, was tern in . . shreds. The claim is now in process of adjustment,

A Boston man took from his pocket what he says he thought was a plece of • paper, and burned half of it in lighting the gas. The gas light revealed the fact • . that he had used a \$20 bill for a lighter. A Washington man, a couple of weeks ago, went in person to the Secretary to get 355 for some badly mutilated bills that his playful pup had been exercising . with for an hour.

A Wisconsin woman has sent a lot of tinder that she says was once 190. Several months ago she hid it in a stove pipe hole, into which a pipe from a laundry fire was recently placed. As the pipe rested on the bills tinder was the

Another woman, this time in Indianapolis, got \$10 in greenbacks mixed with greens she was preparing for diener, and boiled them into an almost unrecog-A loving Philadelphia papa has seked \$30 for a few strips of greenish paper . and a score of pellets of the same material. He says they once constituted a • 130 bill, which his pet boy had torn to pieces, rolled into balls and blown •

through a glass tube at the cat, canary bird and nursemaid.
 An Ohlo man wants to sell the Treasury Department a mouse nest for 1100.
 He says he had that amount in bills in a bureau drawer, and that the nice ap-

 propriated it in lits to build a nome in which to rear their family.
 This list is continually growing, and the communications giving to able details are so frequent as to cause no smile or comment in This list is continually growing, and the communications giving the remarkable details are so frequent as to cause no smile or comment in the depart-ment. Each one is simply a new case that follows along a line of red tape
 until it is adjusted.

hands pointed to twenty-two minutes after a mute witness to the exact time that the disaster happened.

The electric power and lighting systems in St. Louis had been almost to a unit wrecked, the houses of the Fourth street cable and of the Sculin line at Jefferson avenue being two of the power-houses which avenue being two of the power-houses which suffered the most. There were no lights that night on account of the wires being down and not a car line moved after the tornado except the Olive street cable. One of the lines in the northern end of the city was found to be in working condition after the cyclone, but it was ordered stopped on account of the fear that the current passing into wires fallen across the trolley wire might cause accident and fires.

Two departments which suffered severely were the South End police and the members of the Fire Department. The bolice had to work all night rescuing those in the fallen houses, not knowing whether their two homes were standing or not. The Fire Department also had the hardest night in its history. A dozen fires started immediately after the cyclone, which the heavy rain that started a few minutes later was unable to quench. The work of the firemen in crossing the maze of tangled wires which hay upon the ground can be better imagined than described. Engine Company No. 7 at No. 1974 South Eighteenth had responded to an alarm just before the storm burst, and in their absence the house was cattrely destroyed. If the company had almost certainly have been many killed. been in the place at the time there would alreat certainly have been many killed. The pelice station in the corner of Lafayette Purk was almost entirely destroyed, the men stationed inside all fortunately

At the time the wind first rose to its greatest strength, the traditional funnel-shapped cloud of the tornado was seen whirling around through South St. Louis. It was also visible along the fiver front, the stcanners lying along the Leves getting fairly struck and being whirled around and shattered. One boat was blown completely across the river from the Anchor Line wharfboat, and forced up on the bank on the Illinois side. The cloud was also distinctly visible in the neighborhood of the tinetly visible in the neighborhood of the It was also visible along the river front.

Tower Grove district.

During the time that the ternado was in progress the people in all parts of the city were in deadly terror. The disaster was so sudden and unexpected that it seemed to paralyze the residents of the smitten districts, and for the most part they remained crouching in the ruins of their homes until the next morning, chilled by the sudden

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPURDIC.

It is just four years ago to-day that the most destructive cyclone in history struck.

Bt. Louis, causing loss of life to the number of 150 souls and destroying properly worth twelve millions of closure. It was a disast which was followed by the days which was followed by the days which was followed by the days which was followed by the major of the sunday points. It was a couple of seconds right of the passage of trains. The entire sunday is the devastation which was going for buildings which occupied it before the torm the landing was an elected by the closure of the class of the passage of trains. The entire destructive cyclone in history struck with long, sharply defined bars, which resolution of the say in the close of the time of the frame and brick with long, sharply defined bars, which the couple of the passage of trains. The entire destroyed the occupied it hefore the torm the buildings which occupied it hefore the torm the close of the major time the close of the time of the frame and brick with long, sharply defined bars, which resoluted by the buildings which occupied it hefore the torm the close of the time of the frame and brick by the destroyed. The admit to the low with long, sharply defined bars, which the couple of the passage of trains. The entirely destroyed the occupied in the order of the frame and brick by the destroyed of the passage of the destroyed of the class of and there was possibly never a case where so many people passed a night of abject terror as on that occasion. The rain was really a fortunate thing in one sense, as it stinguished a number of small fires which had they been unchecked.

The people in the downtown section also spent a fearful night, or at least several hours. No car line was running except the Olive street, so those who lived in sections of the city to which this line did not exid had either to remain downtown or to compted many to take this inter course, if the walk in pitch darkness, through a curing rain, with a network of wires under foot, was an experience which none will forget who underwent it. In many cases they returned only to find their homes

in rules and some or all of the family

many of the large enhalts down for the day. The are the people thus disentaged a in walking around the city, of devastation which they get. The work of huntless to get. The work of hunties in the rules of the wee tracted large crowds, and which was taken from the awful destruction wrongs over 150 bodies were for the number of injured will as hundreds of cases were. The morning after the class the bild at the Mercial of the state of the st